



## AUSTIN RESOURCE RECOVERY DEPARTMENT

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council Members

**FROM:** Ken Snipes, Director  
Austin Resource Recovery

**DATE:** June 23, 2021

**SUBJECT: Staff Response to Resolution 20210127-057**  
**RE: Trash Collection Service to multifamily residences**

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This memorandum provides a summary of the progress Austin Resource Recovery (ARR) has made addressing the directives of City Council Resolution 20210127-057.

On January 27, 2021, City Council approved Resolution No. 20210127-057 directing the City Manager to explore, identify, assess the feasibility of, and bring back a report on short-term and long-term sustainable solutions to address trash collection equity, illegal dumping, and effective trash collection service for City-serviced multifamily residences, while maintaining low costs for ratepayers and prioritizing the health and safety of workers and neighbors alike.

Options for exploration include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing the frequency of trash collection service at City-serviced multifamily residences;
- Requiring large containers at City-serviced multifamily residences to be removed from the right of way and placed on private property farther from the street, so that the containers will not obstruct pedestrian travel on sidewalks and other rights of way;
- Providing individual or shared cart services to households in City-serviced multifamily residences, while providing protections for affordability to already cost-burdened households;
- Providing shared cart services to properties by billing the property owner or condo association;
- Providing recycling service options for City-serviced multifamily residences that receive trash collection service but are not currently receiving recycling service;
- Providing access to containers that is safe and limits obstructions or unsanitary conditions; and
- Encouraging, funding, or incentivizing screening and the use of design and arts elements, including artistic screening elements, at existing City serviced multifamily residences to discourage individuals from dumping illegally.

***Regarding increasing the frequency of trash collection service***

Per contract, large containers at multifamily residences are collected one to three times per week. Locations are being analyzed to ensure that the contracts are being maximized. The fourplexes located at Sam Rayburn Drive and the fourplexes located in the vicinity of Hearthstone Drive/Hearthside Drive/Fireside Drive have had the frequency of collections increased to three times per week since the introduction of this resolution. Bulk collection at all multifamily locations is currently maximized with two collections per month.

***Regarding the placement of containers***

Containers at multifamily residences are currently close to the curb for truck accessibility. Containers could be placed on the residential property but this would involve the loss of one or more parking spaces for the residents and would require a variance from current ordinances regarding the minimum number of parking spaces required at several of the locations. ARR has communicated with the vendors to exercise care with the placement of the containers so as to not block or impede sidewalks.

***Regarding individual or shared cart services***

The multifamily residences in question are fourplexes which can elect to have cart service from ARR. Billing for cart services is provided by Austin Energy and is billed to each account.

Cart service is more expensive, and the residents may view the services as less than what they currently have. Bulk pick up is done twice per year for residents with cart service as opposed to twice per month. Storage of the carts could prove problematic and impact the ground floor residents in a negative fashion. Residents would be responsible to take the carts to and from the curb.

If shared carts are utilized for cost savings, Austin Energy may have to restructure their billing program to bill the property owner of the complex. Also, additional fees such as fees for extra bag collection, would be applied to the property owner's bill instead of being directed to the customer utilizing the extra services. This could result in variable bills for the residents.

***Regarding recycling services:***

Many of the multifamily complexes in question do not currently have recycling or compost service. ARR is creating an educational campaign for residents of these communities and plan to launch a pilot program for recycling and composting at the Sam Rayburn Drive neighborhood in October 2021.

***Regarding screening and the use of design and arts elements***

Screening and the use of design and arts elements have proven effective in reducing crimes of opportunity such as graffiti. Additions such as these are not eligible to use the Clean Community fund or rate payer monies to erect and maintain; thus, this type of addition is better initiated by neighborhood associations. Care would have to be taken to not build on easements or remove the limited parking places.

*Next Steps (3 months):*

- ARR will develop educational materials and engage the Sam Rayburn community regarding recycling and composting collections

*Next Steps (4 months):*

- ARR will begin the multifamily recycling and composting pilot program in the Sam Rayburn community

If you have any questions, please contact me at [Ken.Snipes@austintexas.gov](mailto:Ken.Snipes@austintexas.gov).

**CC:** Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Anne Morgan, Interim Deputy City Manager  
Stephanie Hayden-Howard, Assistant City Manager